
Session 9 (Day 5 Afternoon)

Building an Economic Development Strategy

Session Overview

Effective local economic development programs systematically address the problems or conditions in communities that impede investment. While the course is designed to illuminate what factors must be in place to attract investment, the participants must determine which of the barriers to investment are most critical. In this session, participants are given the opportunity to apply the knowledge gained in the course to actual problems or conditions that exist in their own country or community. With the assistance of experts in local economic development, participants begin the task of designing a program to address the problems or conditions that impede investment in their own region. In the end, the participants leave the course with the start-up of a new local economic development program already in place.

Session Objectives

- < To identify the most critical barriers to investment.
- < To apply the knowledge gained in the course to real-life problems or conditions that impede investment.
- < To begin designing a local economic development program that will address these problems or conditions.



Trainer's Notes

3 hours

Group Assignment: Building an Economic Development Strategy

10 min

1. Begin the exercise with a discussion of its purpose: to give participants time to work on developing an economic development strategy for their communities. Break into groups according to community, region, or country. As the groups develop a local economic development strategy, encourage them to review their notes from this course. Distribute the handout, "Notes for Implementation." Explain that this handout is designed to encourage them to think about some of the key issues they will confront when planning and implementing economic development programs.

10 min

2. Next, give participants the handout, "Economic Development Strategy Worksheet" to use as a guide for the task they are to complete. Explain to participants that in this task they will develop only the beginning of the strategy; they should do more work on it once they return to their respective communities. Allow participants a few minutes to review the instructions. Ask if there are any questions before beginning. Tell groups that they will have two hours to work on their strategies.

2 hours

3. Allow groups two hours to complete their work. Remind them when there are five minutes left.

40 min

4. Reconvene the whole group and ask a spokesperson from each small group to present its preliminary strategy. The training facilitator and presenters should critique the strategies, offering suggestions on key objectives and steps or programs proposed. Some of the key points you should look for include the relationship between the objectives and the economic development problem or condition that the community wants to change, the sequence of steps proposed for each objective, and the reasonableness of the time frames and expected results.

45 min

Course Evaluation

At the end of this session, give participants an evaluation form and ask them to complete the form before they leave the session.



Handout: Notes for Implementation

As you begin planning and implementing local economic development activities, keep in mind the following concepts.

- < Local governments do not have mandatory tasks to perform in the business development process, but they play an important role in them. Is your organization politically, organizationally, and financially prepared to carry out your role appropriately? What can you do to better prepare?
- < Even in the best-case scenario, the development process requires at least six or eight years to see financial benefit. Is your organization and community committed for the long term? How can you make sure you are ready for this commitment?
- < Setting priorities can be difficult. Will your community focus on meeting the general development needs of the city or supporting economic development? How can you make sure you are balancing these needs appropriately?
- < As the economic development process extends over two or three election cycles, your local government's involvement will need to be based on strategic foundations that can provide the stability needed. Does your local government provide the needed stability to attract new business or encourage business expansion? How can you further ensure such stability?
- < Individual phases of the economic development process require particular tasks to be performed and strategic priorities to be re-evaluated in accordance with what occurs. Are your plans sufficiently flexible? How will you make sure that plans change when needed?
- < Achieving economic development goals depends only partly on what the local government does. It also relies on other key organizations within the community. Have these organizations committed to the economic development process? What can you do to strengthen these relationships?
- < To maintain the development process over the long term, regional cooperation is needed. Do you have links with other like-minded organizations in the region? How can you strengthen such relationships?



Handout: Economic Development Strategy Worksheet

Identify three problems or conditions in the community that the economic development strategy will address.

Next, develop a strategy for each problem or condition using the following table.

Review each strategy to make sure that they complement each other and that they are scheduled to be addressed in a logical fashion.

Potential Institution Responsible for Developing the Program					
Expected Results of the Steps or Programs and Time Frame					
Steps or Programs Needed To Achieve Objective					
Strategic Objective To Be Achieved					



Handout: **Course Evaluation**

Cities Matter: Local Economic Development

Name: _____ (optional)

Overall, how would you rate this course on a scale of 1 to 10 (10 being the highest rating)? Briefly, why did you give this rating?

How helpful do you think the course will be to you in your work?

How has this course changed your thinking about local economic development?

What were the most useful parts of the course? Why?

Please comment briefly on the sessions:

“The Principles and Practice of Economic Development”

“The Role of Local Government in the Global Economy”

“Attracting Private Investment”

“Revenue Raising and Municipal Credit for Infrastructure Investment”

“Maximizing the Value of Local Government Assets and Incentive Programs”

“Developing the Local Labor Force”

“Field Practicum: Local Government Sector, Private Sector, NGO Sector”

“Economic Development Policy and Organizations”

“Building an Economic Development Strategy”

What suggestions do you have for USAID to improve the course?

Other comments?